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TAGS: KCFE OSCE PARM PREL RS

SUBJECT: CFE: MAY 13 JCG PLENARY: GERMAN PRESENTATION ON
FORCE LEVELS

Classified By: Chief Arms Control Delegate Hugh Neighbour,
for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Summary: As part of the continuing "focused dialogue," at the May 13 JCG (Joint Consultative Group) Germany presented an update to its October 30, 2007 presentation on the topic of "CFE Limitations in Transition: Security Concerns and Current Force Level Trends." Using available CFE, GEMI, and VD99 information, Germany presented a statistical analysis comparing TLE holdings between previous (NATO and Warsaw Pact) and current (NATO and others) western/eastern groups in different Treaty areas of application under CFE and A/CFE. In its comparison, Germany stressed the importance of the CFE Treaty and observed States Parties have reduced levels of TLE holdings dramatically, and that, with the exception of Azerbaijan, TLE holdings of States Parties are below group limitations, maximum levels of holdings, and future national and territorial ceilings. With the success of CFE and potential positive contribution of A/CFE, Germany criticized Russia's logic in "suspending" its participation.

¶2. (SBU) In a reprise of the October 30 JCG, Russia again countered Germany's argument with its own TLE data analysis and accused NATO of exceeding the Western Group's TLE limits. Greece, Turkey and Italy supported Germany's conclusions, emphasizing that the bloc approach was obsolete.

The U.S. noted dramatic reductions since 1990, holdings well below ceilings and said Germany's data illustrated again that there was no justification for "suspension" and called on Russia to accept the parallel actions package. Ukraine noted for the meeting that Richter had included Ukraine TLE holdings with the CIS and reminded all that Ukraine's military forces are not a part of CIS. Romania privately told us they were unhappy that Germany's chart showed Romanian TLE had substantially increased NATO overall TLE holdings.

¶3. (SBU) At the May 9 JCG-T 4 Germany informed Allies that Russia continued to want detailed discussion of elements of the parallel actions package in the JCG. Germany gave a preview of its "focused dialogue" brief. The U.S. urged Allies to focus only on CFE-related issue in the JCG. End Summary.

WESTERN/NATO TLE NUMBERS VS. EASTERN/CIS TLE NUMBERS

¶4. (SBU) The May 13 JCG was held under the Iceland Chairmanship. Germany (Richter) presented an update to its briefing on "CFE Limitations in Transition: Security Concerns and Current Force Level Trends." The briefing was a statistical analysis of TLE holdings belonging to previous (NATO and Warsaw Pact) and current (NATO and others) States Parties in different Treaty areas (area of application, original flank, revised flank, southern and northern portions of the flank). Richter produced the various charts using current (2008) CFE information. For Russia, he used the 2007 CFE information, the July 2007 CFE Flank and 2008 Vienna Document 1999 information. For the four NATO non-CFE States Parties, he used data from the 2008 GEMI (Global Exchange of Military Information). During the hour long presentation, which had the same conclusions as the October 30 presentation, Germany countered Russian arguments by highlighting the security objectives of the CFE Treaty, the technical elements of CFE, the regional concept of the agreement and the levels of holding between the eastern and western group of States Parties in Area 4.1 and Area 5.1 (Revised Flank). Richter concluded that CFE was a unique disarmament treaty that abolished the capabilities for large scale surprise offensive action. Richter further added that bipolar limitation concept was obsolete and that CFE is still the "cornerstone" of European security.

¶5. (SBU) Moving on to A/CFE, Germany reminded the forum the

key objectives of the adapted Treaty to include the replacement of East-West balance with a system of regional stability, abolition of group concept, new member accession, national and territorial ceilings, a mechanism for basic and exceptional deployment, and improvement in information exchanges and verification. Richter pointed out that the "Balance of Force," and group approach concepts are invalid and that Russia's complaint that NATO ceilings exceeding the western group limit is based on an obsolete concept of group limitation. By comparing certain TLE holding categories (BT, ACV, artillery) between NATO and CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) in total sum, in Area 4.1 and in Area 5.1, Richter illustrated the lopsided nature bloc-to-bloc comparison of forces and the invalidity of Russia's group concept argument because regional force comparison was dependent on geographical area chosen) that would show different degrees of advantages or disadvantages. Richter also concluded that force comparison in the revised Flank Area was not valid and that the bloc-to-bloc approach was obsolete.

¶6. (SBU) Germany ended its presentation by comparing the total of national ceilings and current holdings of all States Parties for 2007 and 2008 in all TLE categories and in the areas of application and Flank area. Richter concluded that State Parties have reduced their TLE holdings dramatically, that TLE holding of States Parties are belowgroup limitations, maximum levels of holdings an future national and territorial ceilings. Richter also stated that CFE has been successful in maintaining stability and security in Europe and that entry into force of A/CFE will continue to maintain stability through prevention of sub-regional orce concentration.

¶7. (SBU) Throughout Germny's presentation, Richter repeatedly mentioned that the data analysis was incomplete due to the fact that Russia had not submitted its CFE informtation as of 1 January 2008. This was a reminder to all of Russian non-compliance. Additionally, Ricter repeated the theme that Russia's use of a blc-to-bloc comparison/concept was obsolete and inalid.

BLOC) TO) BLOC IS ALIVE AND WELL?

18. (SBU) Greece, Turkey, and Italy voiced their support for Germany's analysis. Each repeated Richter's theme that bloc-to-bloc comparison was no longer valid and is counterproductive. Greece (Sourani) stated that current NATO holdings were below the western level and that the concept of NATO versus CIS is invalid due to the changing security situation in Europe. Souani repeated the offer made in the NAC statement of 28 March for the review of Treaty operation, equipment ceilings, and specific elements after A/FE is in force. Italy (Negro) echoed Germany's conclusion that CFE has helped maintain stability in Europe and that A/CFE will increase stability in the region. Negro voiced support for continuing dialogue in all forums.

19. (SBU) Similar to last year, Russian MOD representative (Uskov) again responded to Germany's statistical analysis with a selective use of Russia numbers. Uskov stated that Russia compares forces not by numbers alone, but rather by "potential" of the forces. He complained that A/CFE was not in force and that the number of States Parties of the Eastern Group are now a part of NATO. Uskov reiterated familiar claims that NATO has exceeded the Western Group TLE limit by 1254 battle tanks, 2691 armored combat vehicles, and 1590 pieces of artillery. He highlighted the fact that the addition of Bulgaria and Romania to NATO had a negative impact on the force balance. In examining the flank areas, Uskov cited numbers with corresponding ratios, taken from 2007 (and not 2008) CFE data, that showed NATO's advantage over Russia in selected (e.g., southern and northern portions of the Flank). (Comment: we are uncertain if Russia used

the 2007 numbers for political effect or just did not bother to update its earlier arguments from October. End Comment). He expressed concerns that the Baltics were building up their force level in preparation for accession negotiation. Russia cannot accept such restrictions.

10. (SBU) The U.S. (Neighbour) joined Germany in rejecting the bloc-to-bloc approach to force comparison. Neighbour pointed out to the JCG that Russia had not provided its data last December and as a result some of the material available for the German analysis was not as complete as it could be. Using 2008 CFE and GEMI data, Neighbour cited the reduction in the overall TLE levels of NATO members even though the number of NATO members had grown from 16 in 1990 to 26 at present. He also pointed out that level of US ground TLE had decreased in the past year by 13 percent, to only a fraction () seven percent) of the levels of 1990 and air TLE today is only 1/3 of what we had in 1990. He stressed the importance of the Treaty by emphasizing the dramatic reduction of TLE to below ceilings and observed that there was no urgency or justification for Russia to "suspend" Treaty participation to redress ceilings or for any other reason. Neighbour, yet again, urged Russia to accept the parallel actions package.

11. (SBU) Russia (Ulyanov), responded to the U.S. comments, noting that some of the US decrease was as a result of Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. Ulyanov stated that the current CFE Treaty is against Russia's interests and that A/CFE has not entered into force. Russia is not interested in bloc-to-bloc force balance. It believed the goal of CFE is for there to be no dominating player in Europe, but current CFE is not doing this. Ulyanov further commented that though there is a rejection of the bloc-to-bloc concept, the JCG operates in a bloc-to-bloc fashion with NATO members disciplined to speak with one voice and that no NATO member is allowed to speak in its own national capacity.

12. (SBU) Ukraine (Herasymenko) noted that Germany had included Ukraine TLE holdings with the CIS and reminded all that Ukraine's military forces are not a part of CIS, which is not a military alliance and not analogous to NATO. Additionally, Romania (Neculaescu) privately told USDEL that it was unhappy that Germany's chart showed Romanian TLE had

substantially increased NATO overall TLE holdings. Neculaescu had foreseen this issue and had communicated his concerns to Richter following the JCG-T, but to no avail. Also in private, the U.K. (MacLeod) told USDEL that her delegation thought Germany's presentation was excellent.

LET,S DISSECT THE 28 MARCH NAC STATEMENT

¶13. (SBU) Russia (Ulyanov) closed the discussion of Germany's brief by suggesting to the JCG that it should look into technical details of ways to restore viability of the Treaty. Ulyanov informed all that at the parallel actions package, had generalities, but no specifics and that he wanted to discuss the guarantees being offered in the NAC statement (and in the package).

JCG-T 4: STAY ON TARGET

¶14. (C) At the May 9 JCG-T 4, Germany (Richter) informed Allies that Russian Chief Arms Control Delegate (Ulyanov) told him that Russia will continue to push for discussion on the definition of substantial combat forces, accession terms for the Baltic countries and Slovenia, and lowering the territorial ceilings of NATO's States Parties. Missing from this list is the earlier demand for a "collective ceiling" for NATO. Ulyanov told Richter that Russia wanted details of these three elements to be included in the parallel actions package and that without such details; Russia cannot lift the

"moratorium." Ulyanov made an identical pitch to USDEL (Neighbour) on 13 May. Neighbour told Ulyanov no and reiterated US views about not disaggregating the package.

¶15. (C) Germany also previewed its "focused dialogue" JCG brief "CFE Limitations in Transition: Security Concerns and Current Force Level Trends" to the group. Richter confided to everyone that through statistical analysis (e.g., comparing ceilings vs. actual holdings), he would "demolish" Russian arguments, highlight the benefit of CFE as well as A/CFE, prove that Russia has no cause for suspension, and that it should accept the parallel actions package. Richter also hoped to prove that future headroom would allow the flexibility to lower ceilings of NATO States Parties.

¶16. (C) The U.S. (Neighbour) urged Allies to focus on only CFE-related issues in the JCG and not other topics currently being discussed in other OSCE forums. A number of allies wondered about the meaning of "active patience" guidance from the HTLF and questioned the frequency of JCG meeting after the "focused dialogue" was completed. Some believe we could reduce the number of meetings and still use the JCG to hit Russia on non-compliance and other CFE-related concerns.

¶17. (SBU) On the margin, the Treaty Operations and Implementation (TOI) Working Group Chair (Italy, Fardellotti), inform USDEL (Claus) that Russia is willing to continue discussion within the TOI, preferably on issues related to A/CFE implementation. Fardellotti asked Russia to submit proposed topics to add to the agenda for discussion within the small group and TOI.

¶18. (U) The next JCG-T 4 will be on May 19 and the next JCG will be on May 20.
FINLEY